GLASTONBURY 89

THE DAY THE MUSIC FRIED

Ninety degrees in the shade—only there ain't no shade! The teeming millions in Glastonbury's chillin' fields.

● The sun-charred dust settles, people return from orbit, the horizon-to-horizon tent city is folded and forgotten, the veggie-venders plan their retirements in idyllic Philippine island retreats, coppers count their overtime millions and the last notes of music float off in search of the ozone layer . . .

What's left to be said about GLASTONBURY '89? Nothing over-profound; just that it was the biggest British festival since the '60s, probably the sunniest of all time, certainly among the most peaceful, and as groovy as it's possible to get without ending up on *Crimewatch UK*.

And, given the difficulties now being encountered by organiser MICHAEL EAVIS (see news story, page three) it may well turn out to have been the last of the peace 'n' love mega-festivals. That, in view of the generally euphoric vibe and the diverse and diverting nature of the music that swamped the three days, would be a shame . . .

On these pages, TIM PATON's pictures capture the atmosphere of 72 hours trapped somewhere between hedonism and headbanging; overleaf ANDREW COLLINS, the Kate Adie of rock journalism, offers his confessions of a survivor and tells what it was *really* like to loiter within tent!

High times: Some (above) got airborne by fairly primitive means, while others (below) used a combination of bad acid and rotary blades. This is the medevac operation during which, according to at least one tabloid, 'deranged' fans 'stoned' the police and medics. Pretty riotous scenes, huh?

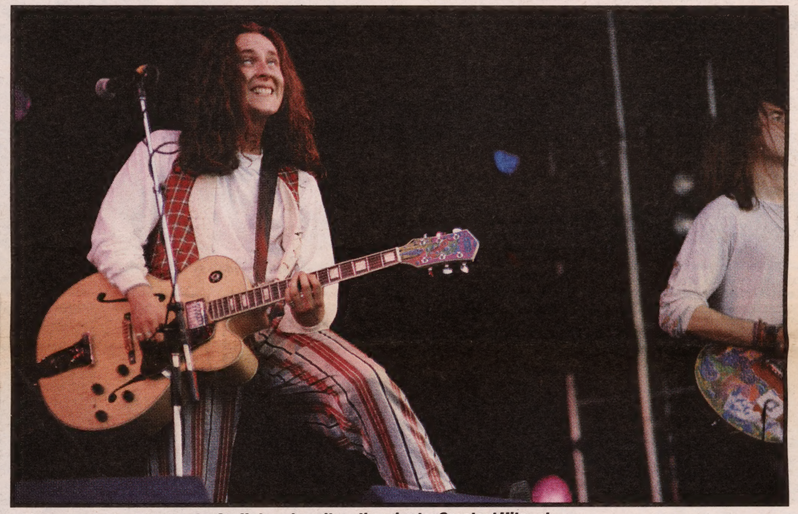
For many people Van Morrison played the weekend's most brilliant set, despite being unable to differentiate between a saxophone and a guitar.

Shirt Of The Week! U2's Adam Clayton attempts to convince Maria McKee of his World Music credentials.

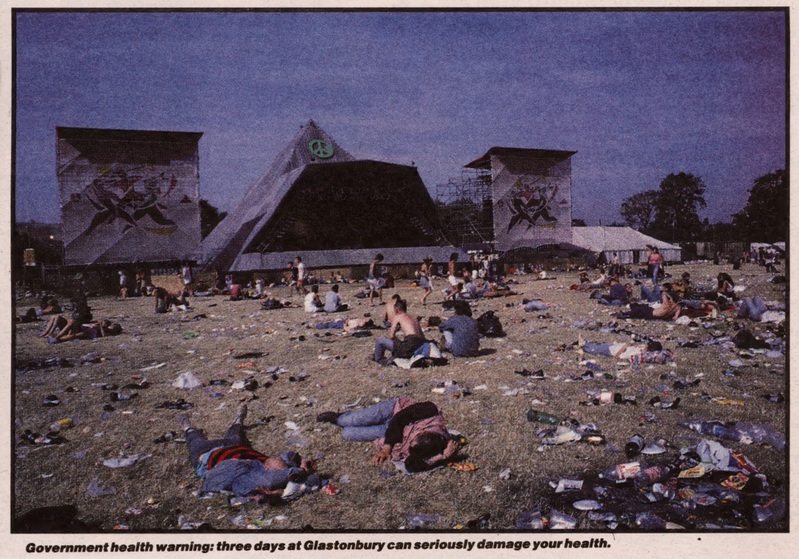
Assorted baskets and basket cases.

Out of it! A Proclaimer puts a friendly arm round his old mates Van and Donovan.

Only another 237 to go . . . In a mammoth Saturday night fever, Elvis Costello played every song he's ever heard or written . . .



The previous day The Wonder Stuff played an altogether shorter Greatest Hits set.



Government health warning: three days at Glastonbury can seriously damage your health.

GLASTONBURY 89

HIGH-DI-HIGH

"Is this f—ing cosmic – or is it a pile of shit?"
(Anonymous toilet graffiti, Glastonbury '89)

● Glastonbury '89, three days of sun, fun and dodgy toilets. First-time festival-goer ANDREW COLLINS packed his tent and went down on the Farm with the hippies, the groovers and the Greens to 'feed his head' Pictures: TIM PATON

"Feed your head!" they said. "Go out there and soak up the *real* Glastonbury!" they said. So I did.

You don't have to be an experienced camper, a CND subscriber, a dyed-in-the-wool hippy, a drug-taker, a Van Morrison fan, or mad to go to Glastonbury – but if you're three out of the six, it helps.

Me? I'd never been camping in my life. I'm a townboy; a creature of comfort; the CD generation personified – dust-free, compact, laser-etched, square and thoroughly modern. Live in a field for three days with a hundred thousand other music fans? Are you sure?

"Yeah! Go for it, man!" said the dirty old hippy inside me (the one that lives in us all.) So I did.

"Festivals, eh? Who'd have 'em?"
(Miles, The Wonder Stuff)

There's only one place you can rent a tent from in South London, and it's in Cheam. A fiver a night for a four-berth they said, one bedroom plus porch. Ideal. So I walked away with an alarmingly small green bundle under my arm and felt dirtier already.

We made some sandwiches, filled a few tupperware pots, packed our Evian, deodorant, notebook, band-name T-shirts, sailing pumps and sleeping bags *and put the sprawling carbon dioxide-choked metropolis behind us.*

Four of us travelled there by car – a bit of an environmentally heavy way to go, but the Festival Haul is no pushover by any means. Hitching may be the most *apt* method – but most cars were as economically packed as ours anyway. We left London at 9.30am. Glastonbury is just two motorways away (about 150 miles) yet we didn't touch down until 3.30pm.

Inevitable, really – but the final straight from Glastonbury itself to Worthy Farm (and then to Gate Two) was more congested than any commuter belt rush hour in Capitalism City. We crawled down narrow lanes more suited to one tractor every half day. One mustn't forget (but one does) that Worthy Farm is only the epicentre of all human life and culture for one weekend a year. It is neither a venue nor a campsite nor a carriageway.

The CND car park crew, however, knew what they were doing and once inside the site, even if progress was Bad Karma in motion, our passage was made easy and our minds relaxed by these fluorescent CND stewards (*dropped em already, eh Collins? Ed*).

Cars were kept off the main site this year, so we, like everyone else, had to tramp from car park to tent park with gear balanced on our heads.

We arrived just as Throwing Muses began playing. A ridiculous time to put them on, we thought, contenting ourselves with top class backing music to pitch to. Our mobile home was soon erected, and Cock Hill Meadow was our new address – just a short stroll from the 500 acres of action.

Glastonbury is just like a scaled-up version of your standard pub gig really – where the band plays their set, and even if 80 per cent of the audience are attentive, there will always be a contingent who mingle at the bar. It's the same at Glastonbury – the Pixies give it their all, while a couple of thousand get a burger, another thousand loiter within tents, 800 queue for a piss, 250 musos dissect the cymbal sound etc. OK, so we're all used to going to gigs. But very rarely do we *live* at them – and I'd say a quarter of the Glastonbury Experience is about listening to bands. The rest is about, well, being in another world.

"Listen to it, Jason – it's very good music!"
(Dad to whining six-year-old during The Bhundu Boys)

What sort of people go to Glastonbury? Mostly young people, yes, but the traditional peace vibe attracts a fair showing of families, too. Parents who've been coming here for years, no doubt, and think the atmosphere will do their kids more good than Transformers and video fodder.

One Dad has given Glastonbury to his eight-year-old boy as a birthday present, and is proud to tell everyone. I found it a rather uneasy experience sitting next to a picnicking family of four while The Wonder Stuff were on the main stage. *"Give Give Give Me More More F—ing More,"* snarled Miles. "Feed your head, kids," said Mum (no doubt.)

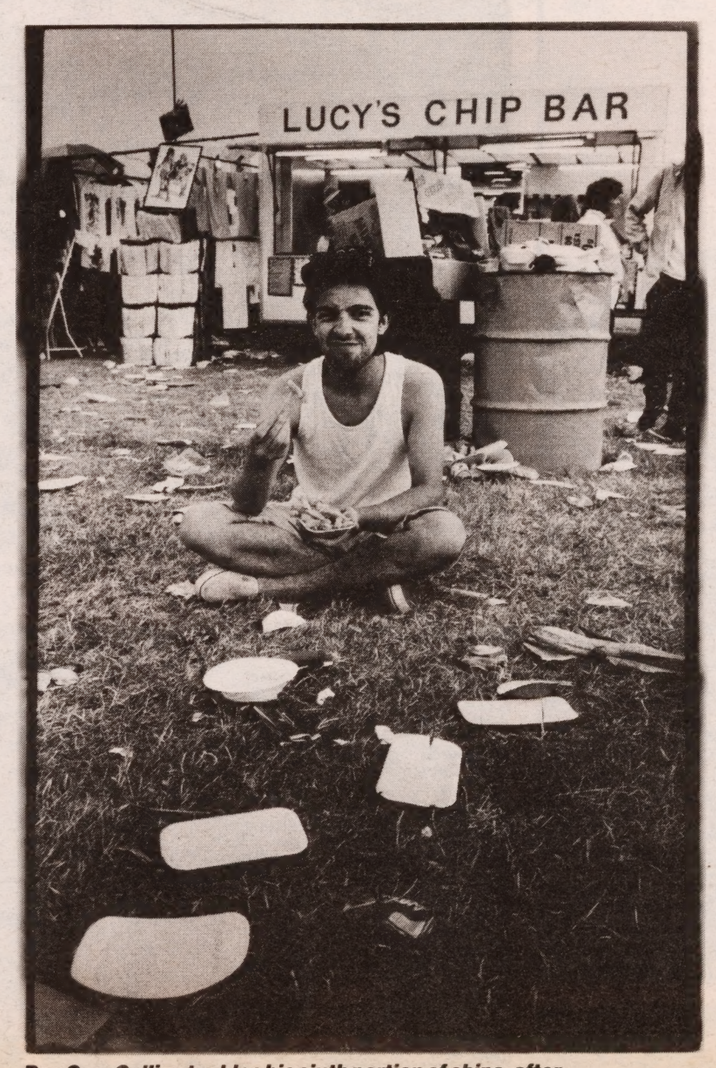
The hippy is not dead. If this is the Third Summer Of Love, then it's just another summer, because from the stereotypical tits-out, tepee-dwelling alternative lifestylers, through Acid House brats to Late'80s punks and '60s throwback guitar bands – we are *all* hippies (even Danny 'Here We Go' Kelly). The Green angle is certainly an issue of today – so this year more than ever before, Glastonbury's right-on ban-the-bomb vegeburger associations were at the forefronts of a few more minds.

Ideological slogan shirts (*Smash The Poll Tax*!, *Bombs Out*!, *Have Your Fridge Recycled*! etc) easily equalled the more predictable New Model Army, Pathetic Sharks and 10,000 Maniacs items.

It's impossible to generalise about the trends of 80,000-plus, on either motive or motif, because for every near-naked Friend Of The Earthworm there was a sun-shy urban type in long sleeves; every filthy, dirty punk held together with DIY tatoos was matched by a Kays Catalogue beachwear bozo slumming it. From makeshift tree-branch shelter to veritable canvas villa, all human life was here.

"Have your handwriting analysed by an expert – £3 or barter"
(Sign in The Green Field)

Money money money. A great deal of it changes hands over three days, over the counter *and* under the gate. Only the love is free (and the alternative medicine that goes down in The Green Field. Have your hay fever cured by aromatherapy or a strategic foot massage!) Once you've paid for your £28 ticket, you've got to *eat* – and this is where the brief to feed my head turned literal.



Day One: Collins tackles his sixth portion of chips, after discovering the vinegar's been spiked.

Being a vegetarian at Glastonbury was the first time in my entire post-bacon reincarnation that I've felt truly catered for. Barely a stall sold no veg alternative, in fact, meat dishes were the exceptions here. A refreshing turn-up (*turnips too?! – Ed*). I ate as much as possible for three days (just for research) and, in general, found the food *fairly* cheap, certainly index-linked with quality, and far more inviting than your average hot dog at a fairground.

Vegetarian curries and burgers were on sale at virtually every outlet in the bustling and co-operative food village. Burgers ranged from 80p (not-very-nice beanburger, Wimpy-style) from Zebedee's, run by a Birmingham co-op called Common Ground and who, it must be said, did a champion veg curry for £1.50; to £2.80 for a superb chilliburger – a meat substitute affair with a ton of topping and good quality crisp salad inclusive from 'Vegetarian Delights', my fave takeaway joint of the lot.

Drink *was* a big problem though, thanks to the unfeasibly hot weather and lack of hiding places. Stalls boasting "cold drinks" usually sold cans from under the table – but one haven of sanity, entitled Simply Cold Stuff, saved us time and time again with *real* chilled pints of Happy Shopper orange at 80p a throw. Next door *real* fruit milk shakes (we watched them load the liquidisers!) were £1.50 (large).

Official beer tents were situated around the showground, each one named after an "aspect of ordinary people's struggles" eg. The Miners Arms, The Tolpuddle etc and run by The Workers Beer Company (all profits to the Labour movement and local community projects in Battersea and Wandsworth) Right on? If only they'd not run out of draught lager about half an hour into the festival – "Sorry – lager's right off." The back-up plastic-bottled lager was luke-cold and a letdown (though at £1.30 a pint it could've been worse.) Real Ale is the true Glastonbury tipple, it seems – or Nicaraguan Rum of course.

All this talk of food and drink – what goes in one end must come out the other. It's time to consider the point at which Glastonbury stops being cosmic, and becomes a pile of shit. (Cosmic shit is still shit.)

Permanent campsites might have toilets – a cow field in Somerset does not. For the purposes of this strange weekend, Glastonbury organiser Michael Eavis had temporary WCs installed. These are basically liberally positioned tin complexes of World War Two-type cubicles leading to one huge metal can, into which the cumulative punter-waste collects and builds. I was told that a five-year-old child fell into the a romatic pit of Death one year, and it doesn't bear thinking about really. Only the wooden toilet seats link this inhuman contraption to pampered, Western reality (and the orderly queues, of course)!

I christened the ubiquitous toilet complex The Tin Machine – and sought to avoid it at all costs. I looked into the hole for intrepid journalistic purposes, and it was akin to looking Satan in the eye. BUT – this year, Glastonbury saw a spattering of more hygenic so-called 'super-loos'. Far more inviting (ie. no-one can see your feet, and they only come in sets of four) these masquerade far more convincingly as toilets, with limited edition paper to boot – and get hoovered out and exorcised with holy water daily.

The toilet queues at Glastonbury this year were only topped by the seemingly eternal lines of campers that led to the water taps for every hour that God sent. (And you *could* drink the water, by the way). If only folk behaved in this orderly fashion at bus stops, eh? The heat bore down from eight till late, and I never saw anyone jump the water queue.

The same went for the toasted sandwich queue, the public telephone queue (I kid you not) etc. If Glastonbury is an evil conspiracy of dropouts, subversives, loonies, lefties, wasters, dissidents and smelly-trousered elements (and it is – *The Sun* says!) then I have seen the future of mankind and it might just work . . .

"I don't want to protect the ozone layer. I'm *enjoying* this weather!"
(Jerry Sadowitz)

Burnt, battered, bewildered, browned off, bloated, baptised and bedazzled – but no-one gets out of Glastonbury *bored*. It's an impossible hive of activity – those tossy old Pop bands beng the least of your concerns.

The Pyramid Stage, The Theatre Field, One Earth Arts Village, and more unexpected stalls than a clapped-out Morris Minor. You could buy (or barter for) T-shirts, sunglasses, clay pipes, baby dragons coming out of eggs, jewellery, loom-woven tank tops, blankets, cushions, bootleg tapes, comix, a mystical 'Zodiac' board game, Roger Dean-type posters, CND flags, hand-printed postcards, hash, speed, LSD, fondue set, cuddly toy . . . you could also get healed, counselled, painted, converted, born again, sold down the river and licked by a police horse. I'm surprised that no bright spark thought of flogging sun tan cream (they did, £7 a tube – Ed).

Yes, you could also buy drugs, even though the surreptitious traders were less *vocal* than on previous occasions, I'm told. (And there were no alarming blokes in black balaclavas this year either.) Substances *were* available (although the official Glastonbury line was predictably *anti* drugs – "Illegal drugs are no more legal here than anywhere else") usually on a gatepost near you – or from travelling salesmen – "'Ash for cash!" was a familiar cry.

"Hi-de-hi!"
"Ho-de-ho!"
(Popular camping wake-up call)

On the Saturday I was awoken by booming dub reggae from some early morning sound system – and 16 hours later, Elvis Costello sang me to sleep. The next morning I was snatched from my damp and fidgety slumber by some unidentified anarcho-protest-duo – "*Revolution/Rev-oooh-looo-shunnn!*" – from whence, who knows?

There was always *one* piece of sensory stimulus to mould and shape my day. Buffeted like a silver ball in one huge cultural pinball machine, I flitted, unavoidably, between standout Pop Music and standup comedy, hiking from field to field in search of the ultimate bill.

In the Theatre Field (a very devoted sort of field, as ill-supplied by drink and nosh as it deliberately was – grape juice and Clusters were all you could suck on – and that was unofficial) the very living, breathing breadth of the place was illustrated to me. A weird performing artist dressed as a fly (complete with metal sieves for eyes) began a wiggly dance behind two cardboard halves of an imaginary eggshell, on an impromptu sort of stage, and all for the benefit of three people.

Meanwhile, fireside fave Attilla The Stockbroker drew in a massive crowd from far and wide to witness a lunchtime session of his anti-establishment skiffle poety in the main marquee. Over the hedge, trapeze artists were doing their thang, and up the hill, no doubt, somebody's gout was being relieved by some knockout herbal tab and a dose of Taoist meditation.

The open-air cinema was popular. After dark – when a thousand flaming torches punctured the blackness, and massed campfire smoke made you weep – a huge screen showed impressive up-to-date features – *A Fish Called Wanda*, *Hairspray* – the serious crowd-puller of the weekend being U2's *Rattle And Hum*.

Naturally, it wasn't all foot-tappin' entertainment. There was a heavily merchandise-backed presence (and boxer shorts maketh the cause these days) by CND (obviously), Greenpeace, Anti-Apartheid, The Abolition Of Slavery Movement, The Jesus Army, Christian Fellowship, Hare Khrishna, alternative education and lots, lots more – all based on information rather than space-invading hard sell.

Up in The Green Field, light years away from al the music and money, I saw a headbanded gentleman building an elephant – life size – out of mud and newspapers (Wapping and daub, I think it's called). No collection tray, no signs, no apparent rhyme nor reason, other than being a contented hippy making an elephant – and that, brothers and sisters, is why this is not Reading.

During Van Morrison's set, back at the main drag, a smaller crowd gathered around this cheerful (and initially somewhat reasonable) Christian chappy, who'd done two things – spent every last penny he had on a wad of hand-printed cards explaining why he'd spent every last penny on them, and carried a bulky wooden cross – life size – to Glastonbury, all the way from Bristol.

As he preached the love of Jesus to this fascinated throng, I noticed, with interest, having done compulsory RE at school, that he had attached a pair of skateboard wheels to the end of his cross, and so decided not to subscribe after all.

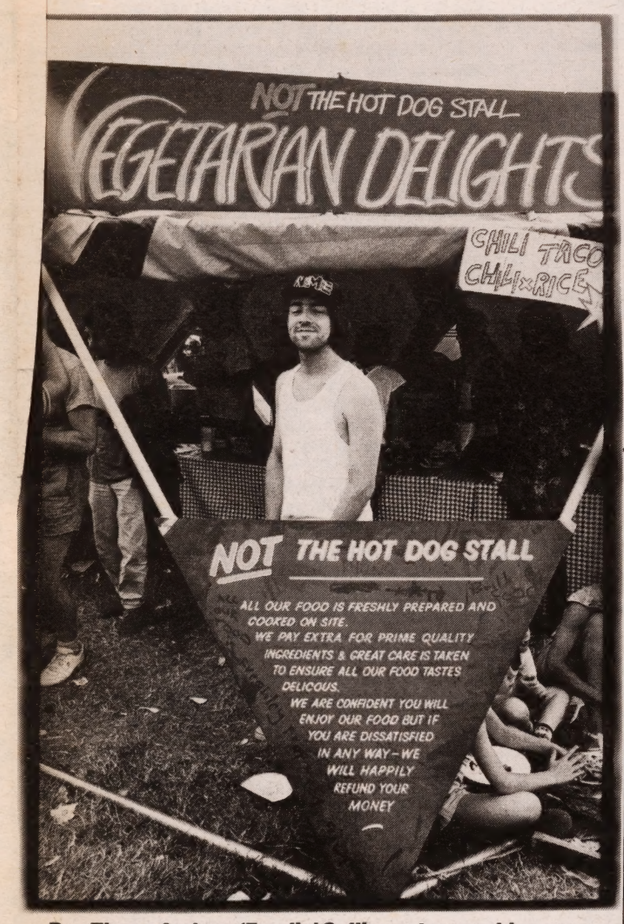
The only violence by 'crazed hooligan pop thugs' that I experienced was an anonymous hand firmly moving my head out of the way while Jerry Sadowitz was doing his one-man apocalypse stuff in the Theatre Tent. With *that* many young people gathered together under the midday sun (between 45,000 and 100,000 depending on your motive), the simple fact that no-one rioted, no-one was plastic bottled, all damage was self-inflicted and internal anyway, and the heavy police presence was genuinely bored, says it all.

The Glastonbury Experience – halfway between f—ing cosmic and a pile of shit. If it wasn't for the damned heat, it would've been more comfortable and yet not as memorable; it was the extremism of it all that has branded it into my memory.

Three 48-hour days of background music, open air sex (two dogs actually), sitting cross-legged, feeding my face, feeding my head, sharing a two-man tent with three Welsh nurses (phew-ee!) and the only cooked meat was my shoulders. I wouldn't have missed it for the earth!

I'm glad I refused the backstage pass the *NME* staff waved at me as they drove off to their four-star hotel in the *NME* Merc when things got sticky. Mind you – I'm quite alarmed by this urge I've now got to call everyone 'man'.

Day Two: dazed and confused Andrew 'Hi,man' Collins joins the queue for the toilet.


NOT THE HOT DOG STALL
VEGETARIAN DELIGHTS
CHILI TACO
CHILLI RICE
NOT THE HOT DOG STALL
ALL OUR FOOD IS FRESHLY PREPARED AND COOKED ON SITE.
WE PAY EXTRA FOR PRIME QUALITY INGREDIENTS & GREAT CARE IS TAKEN TO ENSURE ALL OUR FOOD TASTES DELICIOUS.
WE ARE CONFIDENT YOU WILL ENJOY OUR FOOD BUT IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED IN ANY WAY – WE WILL HAPPILY REFUND YOUR MONEY

Day Three: Andrew 'Foodie' Collins sets up on his own – "heavier on the onions?"